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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort to promote teaching excellence, a faculty committee studied the evaluation of teaching at the University of Arizona and developed recommendations for further improvement and support of teaching and of the evaluation of instruction. The following topics are discussed: (1) judging the reputation of a major scholarly institution; (2) fostering teaching excellence at a major scholarly institution; (3) underlying perceptions about support for teaching (rhetoric and reality; role definitions in a scholarly community; symbolic and physical support; and confusion about teaching documentation); (4) recommendations for supporting teaching and teachers (including the development of a broad definition of teaching to be incorporated into promotion and tenure guidelines, hiring and merit review; development of programs to improve teaching skills; and involvement of student views); and (5) supporting a valid teacher evaluation system (assembling evidence to document teaching that includes scholarly activity in support of teaching, contribution to departmental and university teaching, formal instruction, and individual student contact; and developing documentation and criteria for evaluating faculty teaching). Two appendices provide more detailed information on assembling evidence to document teaching and evaluating faculty teaching. (KM)

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
THE SUPPORT AND EVALUATION OF TEACHING
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Final Report to the Provost
by the
Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching
at the University of Arizona

April 1988

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
THE SUPPORT AND EVALUATION OF TEACHING
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Abstract

This report was invited by the Provost of the University of Arizona, who requested that a faculty committee (1) conduct a study of the evaluation of teaching on the University campus and (2) provide recommendations regarding further improvements in teaching evaluation.

The Committee first addressed the nature of scholarship at a major scholarly institution, offering redefinitions for the traditional faculty "service" mission as "influence," discussing scholarly investigation and exemplary creative practice, and substantially broadening the definition of "teaching" beyond solely instruction to include advising, research direction, curriculum planning, course refining, etc.

The report then addresses four aspects of University support for teaching: the occasional disparities between the rhetoric about teaching and reality, the multiple roles faculty play in a complex institution, the need for symbolic and physical support for teaching, and confusion about teaching documentation.

Recommendations include both (1) suggestions for supporting teachers and teaching and (2) a rationale and system for evaluating faculty teaching in the institution's merit, promotion, and tenure review processes; this system for documenting teaching is adaptable for any similar institution.

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The Committee's Charge

In late 1987 the Provost invited us to examine the evaluation of teaching at the University of Arizona. Our Committee was composed of students with interest in teaching or the evaluation of teaching, and faculty members from throughout the University who through teaching awards, involvement on other committees, personal research interests, or faculty assignment had demonstrated both an interest in the problem of teaching's value and evaluation and a positive concern about resolving that problem. The committee was aided by two graduate students currently involved in research on teaching.

Our charge was contained in an October 28, 1987, letter in which the Provost asked us "as part of the overall effort to improve and promote teaching excellence ... [to] study the evaluation of teaching" on the University campus and to provide him with "recommendations regarding further improvement of the evaluation of instruction."

It quickly became apparent that most committee members had for some time been pondering the question of how teaching could be defined, evaluated, and rewarded in ways that would reflect the complexity of the task and its intellectual, physical, and emotional demands. At the same time, some Committee members were skeptical, feeling that the organization of our Committee and the stated charge might be politically motivated. However, as we discussed the administrative efforts currently underway in support of teaching, and reviewed our perceptions of our charge together with the further explanation provided by Associate Vice President Celestino Fernandez, we decided to proceed realizing that the Provost is as concerned and interested in solutions as we.

This philosophy and several key elements in the charge guided our interpretation of the task. As a Committee we made these interpretations:

1. We recognized that the overall intention is to improve and promote teaching.

2. We focused on teaching broadly defined -- not merely on instruction.

3. We approached the task from a scholarly perspective rather than simply attempting to apply superficial remedies.

4. Our recommendations could address not only teaching evaluation but also teaching improvement and support.

Judging the Reputation of a Major Scholarly Institution

Seeking to provide leadership in academic quality within Arizona, across the American Southwest, and throughout the United States, about fifteen years ago the University of Arizona began an effort toward becoming an outstanding scholarly institution of international reputation. Such status can be judged by accomplishment in three areas: influence, scholarly investigation, and education. In the following paragraphs we explain our view of these three.

First, a faculty's and an institution's influence are effected through service to the various communities to which they belong. (The communities in question are usually either professional or lay communities; a land grant institution like Arizona is obligated to both.) An institution can influence professional and public communities in a number of ways -- providing ideas, providing leadership, providing personal or institutional impact. Through filling positions or by providing leadership in an organization, faculty members can also shape and guide the organization, the structure, the movement, the development of a community. In sum, service to these various communities allows the institution to influence them through ideas, leadership, or other impact. This kind of influence is expected as part of the institution's and consequently the faculty member's role in society.

The second area of institutional reputational judgments is scholarly investigation and its sister, exemplary creative practice. Scholarly investigation may be assessed at several levels. Status is often computed by a count of individual publication records, citation records, or grant monies accrued. At another level, an institution's scholarly reputation can be assessed through the discoveries of new knowledge, the invention of new technology, or construction of systems to utilize discoveries or ideas. Another level of reputation is the contribution of ideas or theories that guide discovery, creativity, or invention in a discipline. This kind of research influence cannot be planned, but it usually occurs at institutions where there is a tradition of excellence, where numerous researchers are doing outstanding work in a variety of disciplines, where opportunities for influencing the most powerful members of both professional and public communities is a routine phenomenon, and where the education afforded students is judged as excellent.

Thirdly, in the educational arena, judgments of institutional quality are made in various ways. Those judgments cannot usually be traced to actual teaching or to single faculty members. The highest levels of educational reputation results when there is a general -- almost universal -- perception held among the educated populace that a graduate from that institution has had an outstanding education. Often, merely being a graduate of an institution carries stature regardless of the graduate's personal performance while a student. These judgments of educational quality are influenced by many factors; traditionally these have included the perceptions of the institution's programs, the perceived caliber of the students the school attracts, the faculty's research reputation, and the resources available to the institution.

These several reputations have been the goal for which the University of Arizona has been striving for the past fifteen years. Indeed, such

publications as the recent Report on Research acknowledge, for example, that the University of Arizona has demonstrated notable accomplishments and made significant strides in the areas of influence and scholarly investigation. Our current Committee's task was to discover how teaching can be supported, promoted and evaluated within the framework of these institutional goals.

In our view, a major scholarly institution improves and promotes its educational mission by prizing both its teaching and its teachers. It treats teaching as an extraordinarily complex mental activity rather than representing teaching simply or condescendingly. Esteem for the institution's educational goals is evident in its support for teaching, one manifestation of which is an integral, valid and defensible system for evaluating its programs, its teaching, and its teachers.

In defining, improving and promoting teaching, a major scholarly institution recognizes a complex definition of teaching.[1] Teaching's purpose is to create a context in which student learning can flourish. Teaching is therefore a process of complicated decision making and problem solving involving a broad range of activities. It requires not only the most definitive subject matter knowledge but also substantial, practical, educational knowledge. Teaching includes not only many kinds of communications with students both in and outside of the classroom, but also the preparation for those contacts. The interaction with students includes "instructional delivery" as well as testing, reading papers, advising, mentoring of individual students, involving students in research and professional activities, and leading workshops, addressing colloquia, or participating in other than routine teaching assignments. Teachers' "preparation" is thus not limited to planning for particular courses or class sessions but also includes other scholarly and/or coordinative activities that support teaching. Teaching occurs in every interaction between scholars and any community they serve: students, colleagues, and the general public.

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[1]During the past academic year the Faculty Senate Student Affairs Policy Committee and the Instruction and Curriculum Policy Committee have also been working to identify a broadened, more representative view of teaching which includes forms of teacher-student interaction in addition to that which occurs in the classroom.

This definition implies that not only teaching but education in general must be broadly defined. A university's educational efforts include more than the efforts of individual faculty members teaching in individual classrooms. The institution's advising programs, physical facilities, scholarly climate, administrative rhetoric and reward systems all influence students' learning directly or indirectly, and therefore are all part of the educational effort. They cannot be considered separate from teaching itself because teaching occurs within these various contexts. For example, if the classroom is dirty, crowded or ill-equipped, or if teaching assistants cannot be understood, or if faculty members are ill-prepared for teaching or discouraged, not only are students' opportunities for learning diminished but instructors must absorb students' complaints about problems they cannot solve.

Our premise has been that at the University of Arizona improving and promoting this scholarly institution's educational mission includes both

> improving and promoting the institution's support for teaching,
>
> and -- as a manifestation of that support --
>
> improving and promoting an effective teacher evaluation model that places faculty members at the center of teaching documentation and appraisal.

Underlying Perceptions about Support for Teaching

We have thus far emphasized that analysis of teaching support and evaluation occurs in at least three contexts:

> the aspirations at the University of Arizona toward becoming widely recognized as a major scholarly institution,
>
> the affirmation that both education in general and teaching in particular are complex scholarly activities, and also
>
> the recognition that a major scholarly institution's climate of support for teaching and teachers significantly influences the quality of education.

While the preceding discussion has treated Arizona's aspirations and an expanded definition of teaching, the following paragraphs highlight the last of these three contexts -- support and promotion of teaching.

Underlying our analysis has been our initial hypothesis of a common perception on campus that teaching is valued less than research and therefore is a secondary concern for faculty and administrators at the University of Arizona.

This hypothesis, developed as we sought data about our charge, was pursued through a variety of methods. We have narrowed our analysis of this hypothesis to four problems:

the disparity between rhetoric and reality;

the narrowness or in some quarters absence of definitions for important aspects of education;

insufficient symbolic and physical support for teaching; and

confusion about documentation of teaching.

Rhetoric and Reality

Our Committee has noted disparities between rhetoric and reality in several areas: in formal administrative discourse, in references to research, in upper- and mid-level administrative views, in promotion and tenure matters, and in institutional publicity.

In his first State of the University address in 1982, President Henry Koffler enunciated a commitment to the University's educational mission and to teaching broadly conceived. Dr. Koffler also stated at that time that teaching should hold as high a priority on this campus as research and service. Although he and others of his administration may personally have maintained his originally stated commitment to teaching, throughout the succeeding State of the University speeches this continuing commitment may not have been clear to the Faculty. In later speeches "teaching" was seldom mentioned explicitly; instead the discourse deals with "educational programs" or "undergraduate education" in the abstract. We hypothesize that this form of expression has also permeated other speeches and less formal statements shaping faculty perceptions of the institution's values.

Additionally, as the University has gained recognition based on research dollars attracted by its faculty, research has become emphasized in the State of the University speeches. For example, the emphasis on using research dollars to compensate for budget cuts accented this focus in 1983 and 1986. The explicit emphasis on research and concurrent lack of explicit emphasis on teaching in these speeches may unintentionally have brought about a perception by administrators and faculty alike that the President's originally stated balanced commitment to scholarship expressed through teaching, service and research had shifted.

We understand these public statements to be attempts at illustrating the University's growing stature as a major scholarly institution. Measuring an institution's reputation is not easy and, as the President has found, communicating those measures is even harder. One measure of reputation could be financial -- for example the external resources attracted from such sources as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Institutes of Health. While President Koffler in his annual State of the University speeches has pointed to such measures, he has also attempted to include other measures of

quality such as faculty appointment to prestigious national committees, evidence of regard and leadership in local and national communities, and teaching awards. However these mentions of reputation are not always distinguished from research activity. In fact, the President's rhetoric around these other indicators is so entangled with references to research that one is left with the impression that research (and most tangibly, research funding) is the accepted indicator of quality for all three institutional missions: influence, education, and scholarly investigation.

This confusion of emphases has far-reaching effects. One of the major results of the rhetoric/reality conflict has been confused communication in middle administrative levels. The publicly stated position of not only the President but also the Regents and the Provost concerning teaching is that energy and effort expended on teaching is valued and rewarded. The perception of many deans and department heads may be that in fact effort expended on teaching by individual faculty members is not valued. Many deans and department heads persist in assuring their faculties that merit and advancement rest solely on research funding and output, despite the Provost's and President's rhetoric to the contrary. The discrepancy of views between upper and middle administrative levels results in faculty cynicism about "utterances from above" and administrators' frustration about the "resistance" posed by faculty.

Another aspect of the rhetoric/reality disparity occurs in perceptions of the weight given to teaching in merit and promotion and tenure deliberations. The 1981 Committee of Eleven survey of faculty perceptions on teaching evaluation and reward indicated strong faculty skepticism about the role of teaching in PT and merit decisions. A 1988 survey of faculty perceptions conducted by the Faculty Senate Committee on Instruction and Curriculum Policy confirms this view: faculty continue to be skeptical about the weight given to teaching in merit and promotion and tenure decisions.[8] It could be that in department and college personnel committees teaching documentation is not deemed as important as research documentation, while at the universitywide level teaching documentation is said to be of equal importance.

An additional manifestation of the rhetoric-versus-reality problem is apparent in publicity given to teaching versus other university missions. In fact, we see a strong hint of bias against teaching evidenced in its shadowed existence on the campus. Teaching accomplishments should receive at least as much attention as research and public service; at the moment they do not. Teaching awards based solely on student ratings and anecdotal reputations have little credibility. Faculty members singled out for other distinctions are often off-handedly referred to as distinguished classroom teachers while in reality

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[8]The Committee has also surveyed department heads and college deans. One hypothesis being examined proposes a potential discrepancy between perceptions of faculty and perceptions of administrators concerning the importance that is or should be placed on the evaluation of teaching for merit and promotion/tenure decisions. The survey results will be available later this spring.

their teaching may be distinguished only with select students in the laboratory. More important, the lack of publicity for the scholarly and intellectual (versus social or charismatic) nature of teaching diminishes its role in the scholarly community.

Budget cuts have also influenced the discrepancy between rhetoric and reality, and brought disproportionate publicity to research. As state funds for education have declined, for example, President Koffler, in his State of the University speeches, has urged faculty to seek outside funding to aid in replacing these monies. He has also encouraged faculty to attract outside research dollars to support addition of new facilities. This emphasis has augmented the focus on research. Furthermore, when the President (e.g. in the 1983 State of the University speech) says that he attempts to use state dollars to fund human rather than physical resources -- on the surface an admirable goal -- the consequent message is that although support for research is found through research grants, resources to support teaching and/or teachers are not available. The compounding effects of these messages may have contributed to the faculty's questioning the institutional commitment to teaching.

In several areas, perceived reality differs not only from institutional rhetoric but also from institutional facts. For example, while President Koffler pointed out in his 1985 State of the University speech that arranging early and continuing personal contact of students with tenure-track faculty is essential, it is a common faculty perception that a University of Arizona undergraduate will never see a tenure-track professor until the junior year, if then. With the cooperation of OMAR, we studied four departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. We found the perception that tenure track faculty do not teach courses under the 300 level to be false for these departments. Overall, the proportions of tenure-track contact credit hours to total credit hours were very positive; the median of the eight semesters studied was over 90%.[3] (This report is being forwarded to the Provost under separate cover.)

Another common misconception concerns the relative weight given to teaching and research in promotion and tenure review by administrators and the universitywide review committee. Although it is said to be a university policy that excellence in research and adequacy in teaching is just as acceptable as adequacy in research and excellence in teaching, this policy is not known, or is perceived to be ignored. The disparity may be between upper and middle administrative levels, as mentioned above, or the disparity between principle and action could be a disparity between action at the universitywide committee level and action in the colleges and departments, or a disparity between perception and reality overall. This principle may indeed be followed at the universitywide level but not at levels below.

A corollary of this misconception is the notion that student ratings are the only form of documentation available for evaluating teaching and the only

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[3]We would caution, however, that these findings may not apply to other Colleges, and that "contact" between tenure-track faculty and students was conservatively defined for this study.

source in current use. Perusal of the dossiers currently being considered by the University Promotion and Tenure Committee confirms that the case is otherwise.

In sum, disparities between rhetoric and reality extend from the highest levels of policy and communication on the one hand to the most basic facts of committee action on the other. We realize that miscommunications are endemic in major institutions like ours, but we must emphasize that in the present context, the effects of these miscommunications upon the teaching mission are massive.

Role Definitions in a Scholarly Community

Faculty roles are much more diverse in major research universities than in institutions where teaching is the sole mission. For the University of Arizona to meet its intentions for attaining scholarly leadership, several aspects of faculty roles require clarification: the definition of scholarship, the allocation of individual faculty resources, and the relationship of funding to faculty role definition.

Scholarship. All University of Arizona faculty members' roles include the kind of scholarship that brings the faculty member (and those they are guiding and influencing) into contact with important questions in thoughtful and scholarly ways which lead ultimately to the advancement of knowledge. But at the University of Arizona, "scholarship" has traditionally been very narrowly defined. Although in his State of the University addresses the President has asserted that "scholarship" is the theme joining inquiry with educational and service efforts, in actual practice the term "scholarship" more commonly refers only to scholarly investigation. There are two unfortunate consequences for teaching of this narrow definition for scholarship. First, if scholarship is investigation, teaching is not seen as a scholarly activity. The consequence for an individual faculty member is that when advised to concentrate on the scholarly aspects of the faculty life, the faculty member concludes that teaching is secondary to other, more "scholarly," pursuits. A second consequence is that teaching -- now seen as other than scholarly -- becomes a menial task, a price to be paid as the faculty member earns the right to be "scholarly."

Another, related problem in the faculty community's understanding of "scholarship" influences faculty roles and faculty evaluation. Scholarly inquiry, and scholarly investigation, have come to be defined solely as research. In as diverse an academic setting as ours, this definition must be expanded. Other forms of scholarly inquiry -- for example active critical writing, distinguished practice, exemplary creative performance, and theoretical syntheses -- stand with research as means whereby knowledge is advanced.

Not only for the good of the faculty community in general but also for this analysis, it is important to clarify these conceptions of scholarship and scholarly inquiry. We have placed this analysis of teaching and teaching evaluation within the scholarly context. Without those expanded definitions and clarifications, our analysis is not useful.

We are particularly concerned, furthermore, about the popular cliche that research activity is a necessary prerequisite for university teaching. We believe this narrow view also requires elaboration and clarification. It is true that excellence in scholarly activity is a prerequisite for excellence in teaching. Outstanding teaching requires active participation in knowledge generation in the specialty field through original contributions to the field. Teaching requires other forms of scholarship as well -- awareness of the field's newest thought, creative conceptualizations of important topics, participation in discussions about issues. These are manifest in various forms of scholarly involvement, only one of which is research; others may be active critical writing, intensive study in the field's current literature, and exemplary practice or performance. Research is only one avenue toward the teacher's intense involvement in the field's ideas, discoveries, concepts, and frontiers.

Role interpretation. For an individual faculty member beset by conflicting rhetoric about expectations and responsibilities, the lofty goals of scholarship provide little guidance. Also lofty but insufficiently explicit are the inspirational standards found on the reverse of every faculty member's contract:

> ...to preserve intellectual freedom, to practice intellectual honesty, to work for constructive and orderly change ... [to] hold before students as best they can the scholarly standards of their discipline .... to foster honest academic conduct ... [to] recognize that students are individuals and are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning....

The University's draft 1988 Mission statement also implies a complexity of expectations for each faculty member:

> A university's primary task is to create an environment in which learning can take place .... What is important is the creation of a community of scholars, from experienced researchers on the cutting edge of their disciplines to students taking their first steps on the way to a deeper understanding of themselves, their world, and their futures as citizens and professionals. ... [the University faculty] are recognized original and productive scholars in their fields, who are devoted to scientific inquiry, humanistic scholarship and artistic creativity, and who are committed to excellence in teaching....

In stark contrast to these ambiguous expressions are the personal interpretations made by individual faculty members about their roles as scholars. Faculty define themselves through a complex interaction of personal beliefs, remembered models, colleague examples, new insights, and an interpretation of what the institution values and will reward. The common notion that there is a direct conflict between the opposing forces of teaching and research is a superficial analysis. Faculty roles are negotiated through individual allocations of time, money, energy, and talents to many competing and complementary demands. While this negotiation may be envisioned in the abstract within the constraints of the institution's mission and goals, in

practicality the faculty member struggling to balance multiple demands is buffeted by the policies, politics, and realities of life within the institution. In the end, faculty members express their values and their commitments in the way they allocate their most precious, personal resources: talent, attention, time, energy, commitment, personal funds. The crux of the decision in a scholar's life -- and often the conflict for the scholar -- is how to allocate these precious, limited personal resources among the many worthwhile and competing demands of the scholarly life. Any conceptualization of faculty roles -- for example a system for evaluating faculty performance -- must account for this complex view of faculty resource allocation.

Funding. Limitations in financial resources compound the problem of role definition. Faculty members' definitions of their roles rest in part upon availability of resources. As state funds have declined, the solution has been to "cut operations, not personnel." Because these "operations" are in large part the resources that support teaching, the net effect has been that teaching -- being almost entirely state funded -- has suffered more than research, which is not as dependent upon state funds. These perceptions have often led faculty to conclude that a more secure role can be found in research than in teaching, and that faculty teaching assignments are best avoided if external funds can be found. Moreover, research funding is often said to "reward" investigators by relieving them of teaching assignment -- another indication that teaching is not seen as a scholarly activity and the only "real" scholarship is funded research. The perception of colleges, departments and faculty alike seems to have been that the most secure role for a faculty member is one protected by external research monies.

In sum, both personal and institutional perceptions of the faculty member's proper roles require refinement. If faculty members' roles cannot be defined in more balanced ways, the University of Arizona can remain a reputable research university but it will not attain the reputation it seeks -- the reputation of greatness in the highest echelon of scholarly institutions.

Symbolic and Physical Support

Lagging physical and symbolic support for teaching surfaced as a topic of concern as we pursued our initial hypothesis. Insufficient support has been seen, for example, in classroom conditions, deteriorating services and support to instructional delivery, perceived lack of value for teaching, few opportunities to improve teaching, and the unfortunately timed crisis in IRAD leadership and services.

Difficulties in physical and technical support for teaching have not gone unnoticed by the present University administration: currently underway are several efforts to rectify these problems. There is an effort, for example, to coordinate teaching support services like media and supplies. Also encouraging is the major effort to modernize classrooms, concentrating currently on large classrooms and next year on the Social Sciences, Modern Languages, and Education buildings. The annual symposium on teaching has been well received. The Provost has begun initiatives in such other worthwhile areas as Honors, composition, and undergraduate mathematics. The University Teaching Center's future seems promising although recent, significant credibility losses will require time to mend.

Other problems remain. Classrooms are cluttered and filthy. Media support (such as commercially prepared and up-to-date videotapes, films, computer simulations, and overhead transparencies) is seldom available from campus sources and is often purchased by teachers from their own personal funds.

Human support for teaching -- secretarial, technical, and teaching assistants -- present a more complicated problem. Since such supports are often disseminated from the department or dean level with flexible monies that could instead be allocated to research, the individual administrator's opinions about support for teaching vs research can significantly influence the human support provided to teaching. It is a common perception that for many deans and department heads, teaching takes second place to research when hard choices must be made.

Faculty perceptions of inadequate support for teaching may seem perplexing to senior administrators who point to recent efforts and expenditures for improving the University's undergraduate programs. Examples of these efforts are:

revision of general education requirements for undergraduates

required testing and training of teaching assistants

revision of the lower division mathematics program to reform the curriculum and decrease class size

addition of categories of lecturer and senior lecturer to permit addition/retention of undergraduate instructional strength

improvement in student services such as the computerized registration system.

Although these initiatives have addressed critical issues and have been successful in improving the "undergraduate experience" as a whole, it has been our conclusion that in the minds of faculty members, perceptions of insufficient administrative support for teaching are not compensated for by money devoted to such programmatic efforts.

Our analysis of the rhetoric in the State of the University addresses provides a clue to this enigma. The problem could be that funding is often said to have gone to "programs" rather than to "teaching." Faculty members do not consider themselves to be "programs" and they seldom link "programmatic efforts" to their own teaching or their students' learning. If this is true, then funding and rhetoric should be directed to projects closer to actual teaching functions, and/or the link between these programmatic efforts and actual teaching and learning must be clearer.

Confusion about Teaching Documentation

There appears to be -- from evidence gathered by anecdote at the meetings we attended across campus -- astonishing variety in the way teaching is

documented and variety as well in the views faculty members hold about teaching documentation. The Senate Committee on Instructional and Curriculum Policy is currently conducting a survey of the processes and materials used to document and evaluate teaching across all academic units; the results from that survey should be useful universitywide.*

Our own Committee sensed a general dismay about the way teaching is evaluated on campus. The issues we identified in this area were (1) the scholarly context of teaching evaluation, (2) the role of faculty members in their own evaluation, (3) the multiple sources needed for evaluation, and particularly (4) the important role of student perceptions in evaluation of teaching.

The first of these issues is the contradiction between Arizona's growing status as a scholarly institution on the one hand and the most common strategies for teaching evaluation on the other. While research is evaluated as a scholarly activity, with the candidate's statement and submitted writings being advanced as evidence of scholarship and judged by colleagues as such, teaching is often evaluated more superficially, with student ratings or laudatory anecdotes often offered as the only documentation, and these without explanations of their scholarly context. This report's recommendations address this problem.

The existing narrow view of teaching focusing on classroom instructional delivery severely constrains teaching evaluation. A narrow definition eliminates the scholarly aspects of teaching and draws attention to only one aspect of teaching -- classroom delivery. This narrow definition further makes faculty members invalid and suspect sources of information for their own performance evaluation. It places faculty members at the periphery of their own teaching evaluation, substituting other sources at the core. When the teacher cannot serve as the focus of his/her own teaching evaluation, a punitive politicization of teaching evaluation results. For example, student perceptions and hallway anecdotes emerge as the only sources of information on teaching quality.

Multiple sources of information in teaching evaluation are necessary for several reasons. First, in a scholarly community teaching is valued as a complex activity. Further, to create an accurate "picture" of that complexity, many sources of data are required. In addition, multiple sources allow all participants involved in the teaching to provide their view; the result is a much fairer impression of teaching. And finally, for psychometric reasons multiple sources are needed to insure the validity of the judgment.

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*The Committee is finding a wide range in the quality of the information available from each unit, from very detailed and complete to very general and scanty. The extent to which each component of teaching evaluation -- self, student, peer, administrator -- was incorporated in many units' evaluations for merit and promotion/ tenure cannot be validly determined. The Committee is proposing that each unit's process of teaching evaluation be more open to scrutiny and available to other departments, perhaps through a more clearly designated teaching effectiveness faculty committee within each unit.

One or two of our committee membership advocated the use of students -- the "clients" of education -- as the sole evaluators of teaching. Most of us would argue that multiple evaluators including self, administrator, peer, and student should contribute to teaching evaluation.

The question of how best to employ student views in faculty evaluation is particularly important. Our committee affirms that student views fulfill an invaluable role in evaluations of teaching. Students can evaluate aspects of teaching that no one else can assess. All faculty appraisal schemes should include student views in the overall evaluation system. The error is in using student views as a surrogate for other sources of evaluation information. The controversies in the research literature and among thoughtful faculty do not concern whether to involve student views in teaching evaluation, but how to involve those views so they can be most valid as well as most forcefully heard.

Student views can be represented in teacher evaluations through a variety of methods. Course exit interviews and graduating senior interviews are creatively used at some institutions. Alumni surveys can be revealing if care is taken to assure adequate responses. Student narrative reports on their experience in a specific class and their advice for class improvement have long been used by teachers for course improvement. Promotion and merit committee can form teams of students to prepare their own summaries of data assembled about each candidate's teaching skill.

Student ratings, the most common method for obtaining student views of instructors, have been studied for many years and refined for both diagnostic use and personnel evaluation at many universities. However, research on student rating systems does indicate certain complications in their use, complications of which faculty should be aware. The key psychometric problem is disentangling the meaning of an individual student rating: for example students may be assessing their own learning, the relationship with the instructor, the circumstances of the student's life and/or the institutional constraints attached to a course. These elements are not proportionally the same across students within the same class, or the same for one student rating several instructors. This combination of technical and credibility problems emerging when student ratings are used can result in further disillusionment by faculty members over the value placed on teaching and can result also in direct attempts to achieve better ratings.

Student ratings are very important; they give an important indicator of student satisfaction with education, and they can point to problems with courses or instructors. Student ratings are central in evaluation of several aspects of instruction -- instructional delivery, for example, and the nature and effects of the faculty member's individual interactions with students. The error with student ratings is using them as a surrogate for other sources of data. It is folly to expect student ratings to substitute for the broader evidence about teaching needed for complete faculty evaluation. Students cannot be held responsible, for example for knowing whether they have acquired knowledge or skills they will need in succeeding courses or in their profession, or whether the course content was consistent with the theoretical structure of the discipline.

Thus, while we recommend use of student ratings and while we believe that students offer invaluable information about courses and instructors, it is clear to most of us that student ratings cannot provide all the information necessary for proper teaching evaluation.

Recommendations for Supporting Teachers and Teaching

Support of teaching means maintaining an environment that enhances the interactions among students, teachers, and the learning process. Our first set of recommendations addresses the support and promotion of teaching. Following are recommendations for support of -- including valid and systematic evaluation of -- the teachers themselves.

Support of Teaching

The recommendations below for support of teaching fall into three categories: analysis of and change in perceptions, the support facilities for teaching, and attention for teaching.

We realize that a basic change in the attitude of all faculty toward teaching may not be possible; however, we do feel that a change in the perceptions of faculty, and therefore the perceptions of the teaching effort, can be achieved by appropriate actions. The first two recommendations are designed to publicly emphasize the value of teaching and to change the clarity and faculty perceptions of the University's teaching effort. Changing these perceptions is essential in changing the climate for supporting teaching.

> **Recommendation:** The Provost should encourage analysis of and, as appropriate, corrections of the disparity of views between upper- and middle-management levels within the University on the role of teaching in a major scholarly institution. He should ensure that middle administrative personnel are convinced of his views on this subject.
>
> **Recommendation:** A broad definition of teaching that emphasizes teaching's scholarly and intellectual aspects and encompasses a wide range of scholarly activities is required. The University administration should incorporate such a definition into (1) promotion and tenure guidelines, (2) program review procedures, (3) teaching award criteria, (4) hiring practices, and (5) merit review procedures.

Support for teaching has increased significantly in recent years. Many of those sources of support should be continued, such as the revitalization of the University Teaching Center (UTC) and funding of the Provost's Teaching Improvement Awards Program. Although we are told that research on teaching is not in its present charge, we believe that UTC could become a place for the study of university teaching where outstanding University faculty could focus both on understanding teaching and development of teaching excellence. At UTC, highly competent faculty could develop their expertise as teachers, study

teaching in a scholarly fashion, and articulate that expertise to others. Mediocre long-time faculty could question their teaching, study it, and seek ways to improve it. Newly hired faculty could be helped to develop their potential as teachers.

Recommendation: The University Teaching Center should develop a program for new faculty members inexperienced in teaching, including such efforts as well-developed seminars on teaching, orientation to campus teaching resources, and assignment of new faculty members to more experienced faculty mentors previously recognized as excellent teachers.

Recommendation: The University Teaching Center's charge should include providing education for all faculty in specific teaching skills, such as deciding how to structure disciplinary content for teaching clarity, advising, syllabus preparation, organization and clarity in dealing with students, strategies for effective and valid evaluation of student learning, using media, choosing and using appropriate teaching strategies, and designing course work to account for individual student differences.

Recommendation: The University Teaching Center should explore and disseminate new methods of involving student views in the teaching evaluation process described later in this report. This effort should include the adoption of a well-designed and validated format for obtaining regular student feedback about courses and instruction.

Recommendation: The University Teaching Center's mission should be expanded to include coordinating the efforts of U of A scholars to produce and disseminate high quality research on university teaching.

No single University Teaching Center director, however well intentioned, has the expertise or time to meet these intentions.

Recommendation: The University Teaching Center professional staff and affiliated faculty should include both educational professionals with expertise in the fostering of teaching excellence, and established faculty members who will serve as mentors and guides to other faculty and to teaching assistants.

Support for teaching has increased in recent years. We applaud these efforts. We offer the following suggestions for continuing these initiatives:

Recommendation: A timetable should be established and intentions made public for continuing (1) upgrading of facilities, (2) collecting and making available teaching materials, (3) supporting training for and access to teaching equipment, (4) re-examining and possibly redefining human resource allocation for teaching support (e.g. secretarial, technical, programming), and (5) exploring creative ways to seek external funding for teaching (e.g. endowed classrooms, sale of teaching innovations).

Support for and promotion of teaching requires not only changed perceptions and changed tangible support but direct publicity efforts as well. Publicity for teaching requires reliable and accessible data about course offerings, enrollments, loads, and successes. It has been our understanding that such data are not readily available and may not be reliable. Energetic support for teaching requires good data about teaching.

Publicity efforts must not only be energetic -- they must also be serious, scholarly, and credible.

> **Recommendation:** Continue recent efforts spotlighting teaching in University publicity as vividly as research is now emphasized. This effort could include (1) making clear in the University community and beyond how, and how many, students are taught; (2) publicizing the rich intellectual life of the teacher; (3) highlighting teachers in alumni publications; (4) giving greater academic credibility and public attention to teaching awards, and (5) asking award-winning teachers to assist in campus-wide teaching improvement, e.g. through consultations, seminars, and lectures.

Support for Teachers

Teachers themselves will be supported indirectly through the efforts recommended above for support of teaching. For example, if middle institutional management levels should adopt and implement the Regents' and upper administrators' values about teaching, the climate in which teachers and students pursue their joint scholarship would improve immeasurably.

More tangible and more specific efforts can also be made. For example, while current methods for recognizing outstanding teaching (promotion/tenure, merit, awards) may be intended to induce improved teaching, the rewards are so remote from daily activity that everyday teaching quality can hardly be influenced. Faculty members' teaching innovation, improvement and reassessment are more likely to respond to front-end incentives than to the distant mirage of a teaching award. More direct inducements for influencing faculty commitment to teaching are needed.

> **Recommendation:** Incentive systems such as the funded Provost's Teaching Improvement Awards and sabbaticals for teaching or curricular improvement should become the preferred means for encouraging attention to, innovations in, and refinement of teaching.

Supporting a Valid Teacher Evaluation System[5]

Teachers will also be supported by institutional adherence to a faculty evaluation system that acknowledges the intellectual complexity of teaching and its importance in the scholarly life, while assuring the teacher that s/he will be evaluated fully and equitably. The systems for documenting and evaluating teaching outlined below address those goals.

The first critical issue in evaluation of teaching is its purpose. Our view is that teaching is evaluated in order to provide information for decisions about that teaching, e.g. to encourage exemplary teaching or to effect improvements as warranted. Improvements can be implemented by the individual teacher, whose teaching evaluation results will suggest areas of strength and areas for change. Over time, institutional improvements will be effected through the institution's efforts to hire, promote, tenure, and reward excellent teachers.

In a universitywide teacher evaluation system the second critical issue is how teaching will be evaluated, and the corollary is who will be central in that evaluation process. If teaching is valued, careful attention should be given to deciding who judges teaching quality.

Our approach to this question of judgement is to place faculty members centrally in the evaluation process. In the systems we propose below, the faculty member being evaluated is central because s/he assembles documentary evidence about teaching, including arranging for evidence to be provided by students. The faculty member's colleagues are central as well, because peers and administrators evaluate that evidence.

The research literature on faculty performance appraisal reveals no unanimity on a single, ideal system for teaching evaluation, except to cite the principles we have reviewed in this report. The systems we propose (1) provide more concrete documentation of teaching effectiveness than has been available traditionally, and (2) employ the expert judgments of colleagues, supervisors, and self together with student evaluations so that multiple sources can contribute to the overall judgment of any individual's or department's teaching success. These two objectives are manifest in two systems, discussed in the two sections below and supplemented by attachments to this report. These systems should be used to serve the dual purposes of providing diagnostic feedback for faculty members and departments about their relative success in teaching, and providing a means of evaluating teaching for personnel decisions.

> **Recommendation:** The two systems recommended herein should be adopted throughout the University for annual reviews and merit decisions. While all the information provided by the teacher may not be written anew each

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[5]Evaluating entire academic programs is a matter of program review, beyond the scope of this committee's attention. However, the philosophy, the strategy, and some of the procedures outlined here for evaluation of teachers can, in aggregate, provide valuable information for program review.

year, the five-point format recommended in Attachment A should be followed for all faculty annual reviews of teaching.

Recommendation: The data resulting from annual use of the two systems recommended here should be aggregated as part of the promotion and tenure review process (1) by each faculty member, (2) by the faculty member's department head or director, and (3) by peer review committees.

Recommendation: The data resulting from the two systems recommended here be used as the empirical basis for teaching awards.

A System for Assembling Evidence to Document Teaching

Placing faculty members at the center of their own evaluation processes requires them to be the major source of the information used by those who evaluate them. The price of faculty centrality in teaching evaluation is that the process of creating and gathering this information is time-consuming. Nonetheless, because faculty members should not be asked to relinquish this central position, and because faculty members are the sole source of some of their information, the complicated task of information assembly falls to them. The information assembly is analogous to assembly of a professional portfolio: it should document the teacher's work and illustrate the variety and depth of his/her teaching efforts. It is analogous also to the faculty member's assembly of theory, rationale, methods, and findings in a research report. In both research and teaching evaluation the scholarly effort is not visible until it is documented; the difference in documentation of teaching is that in reality the faculty member might need to plan more consciously for assembly of materials that with research documentation would be automatic.

Recommendation: The University of Arizona system for evaluating teaching for every faculty member must include as a frame of reference two essential bodies of information provided by the faculty member: a statement of philosophy, and an outline of the teaching responsibilities whose performance quality is being evaluated.

Attachment A for this report is an outline to be used by all faculty members across the University of Arizona campus, with appropriate adaptations, as they compile information for annual reviews of teaching; the annual review information should in turn be required as part of the promotion and tenure review process.

Recommendation: The four categories of evidence proposed for teaching evaluation are

*scholarly activity in support of teaching,
*contribution to departmental and university teaching,
*formal instruction (both preparation and delivery), and
*individual student contact.

These categories should be uniform within and across University of Arizona departments and colleges to permit comparability of faculty evaluation.

Recommendation: The illustrative elements listed under each of the four categories in Attachment A may be adapted to departmental and individual teaching differences. Each department should establish its own priorities for elements of teaching considered most valued. Departments may, for example, specify some elements within the four basic categories as essential and others as desirable.

A System for Evaluating Faculty Teaching

The differences between the current Provost's guidelines for assembling Promotion/Tenure dossiers and the system proposed by this committee are few but important. The present guidelines mention a variety of sources of information similar to the sources listed in Attachment A, but not in the categories we propose. Attachment B differs from the present procedure by more closely linking the sources of information with the assessments made by administrators and peers.

The system proposed in Attachment B bases teaching evaluation on evidence assembled as outlined in Attachment A. Other information that can contribute to the assembled evidence -- for example assessments by colleagues outside the University -- is also customarily used. The system consists of a set of categories to be rated by administrators and peer review committees. For each category the documentation to be considered and criteria to be employed are described, and the evaluators using the rating system are required to support and explain their judgments.

Coda

It has been this Committee's intent to affirm that teaching should be valued by -- and therefore should be evaluated as -- a complex, scholarly activity within an institution devoted to scholarship. We have seen support for teaching as a necessary prerequisite to evaluation of teaching. We have implied that evaluation should address the broad range of efforts called "teaching." We have resolved to place faculty members and students as centrally in the teaching evaluation process as they are in the learning process. And we have offered a dual system for teaching documentation and evaluation that both requires a variety of evidence and mandates a link between that evidence and the judgments that follow.

Report of the Committee on Teaching Evaluation

ATTACHMENT A:
Assembling Evidence to Document Teaching

The faculty member provides evidence to document teaching in each area listed below. While few faculty will include information in every possible category, all should provide information wherever applicable. The faculty member's assembly of this information includes arranging for systematic evaluations by students in the appropriate areas.

It is expected that each faculty member assembles this information annually. For 2- and 4-year assistant professor evaluations and for promotion and tenure reviews, the annually assembled information will be aggregated and further evidence added as appropriate.

1.0 Educational Philosophy and Teaching Assignments: This information is designed to serve as a frame of reference for colleagues who will be evaluating subsequent categories.

1.1 Candidate's Statement A paragraph states the faculty member's teaching philosophy and intentions as they relate to teaching assignments. It explains the teacher's view of teaching as a part of her/his scholarly life, including the way various teaching assignments reflect this scholarship, and the connections among these teaching responsibilities and the goals and purposes of other scholarly work. The teacher could list academic course work and professional experience relating to teaching. This statement is like -- and in promotion/tenure review dossiers could be parallel to or part of -- the candidate's overall statement about scholarship, research, and/or creative activities.

1.2 Extent of Teaching An overview of the faculty member's teaching responsibilities including an explanation of the assigned teaching load. This section presents such data as the number of courses taught, enrollment, courses offered voluntarily, advising numbers and level, independent study and graduate committees.

2.0 Scholarly Activity Supporting Teaching

Study, textbook preparation, travel, participation in artistic or creative activities, and other kinds of professional work that informs teaching and/or improves knowledge of the teaching field. Particularly important are the faculty member's efforts to develop new knowledge to supplement teaching, or to enhance teaching effectiveness (e.g. through UTC). For elements listed, the faculty member would link the activity to the philosophy summarized above and to current or future teaching assignments.

3.0 Contributions to Departmental and University Teaching

Such work as committee assignments, participation in course and curriculum development, team teaching, and meetings and guidance for graduate assistants could be described. Also included could be internship, observation, or other work with students in off-campus settings. Extra-departmental contributions such as Honors or other interdisciplinary teaching efforts should be noted. Also included will be teaching beyond regularly scheduled courses or individual students; this category includes guest lecturing that is instructional in nature, substituting for colleagues, and colloquia/-workshop presentations on or off campus [presentations of research findings should not be included here].

4.0 Formal Instruction Documentation for each course includes an overall statement of the teacher's conception of the course, including an explanation of how the supporting material contributes to these goals; in some cases the course syllabus will summarize this information.

4.1 Instructional Preparation and Planning The syllabus, the text/readings/cases/assignments and the tests show how the subject matter of this course is represented to students. The teacher also explains why the content of the course is organized in this manner. The teacher could summarize student response to this course and the work as outlined. The teacher would also indicate information that affects course planning such as enrollment, level of the students and of the course, whether the course was taught for the first time or after extended experience, and whether the course is required or elective.

4.2 Instructional Delivery A description of the delivery system(s) used for each course (lecture, discussion, seminar, etc) with rationale. These should include a self assessment of the quality of one's own instructional delivery. In this section the teacher can explain the nature of student reactions and to describe problems negotiated between teacher and students. [An optional addition to this category would be proposals for alternative ways to teach this course, together with a rationale for the alternative and resources needed; internal and external colleague support and student views on the alternative could also be provided.]

5.0 Individual Student Contact

All other interactions with students that lead to students' learning and/or their professional or personal development are documented here. The faculty member may explain connections between these areas and the earlier statement of educational philosophy. Included could be such teaching efforts as the following:

Advising (the number and level of students advised and the context of the advising and hours of contact)

Mentoring (Independent studies, clinical instruction, and other student/faculty interaction outside the classroom. Theses and dissertations and membership on graduate committees could be discussed individually, for example with name and academic level of the student, the nature of the work, and progress achieved. The teacher could include projects in progress as well as project completed; also included could be other demonstrable effects of the teacher upon the student, for example student publications and presentations, awards, and professional progress such as job placement or service in professional organizations. If the majority of a teacher's effort lies in this category, s/he may include more extensive discussion of the teaching's context and content.)

Guiding research (Instruction and experiences provided through student involvement in the teacher's research; students could be named, and the kinds of instruction -- including amount of personal contact and direction -- described.)

Suggested Sources of Data for
Categories in Attachment A

Educational Philosophy / Teaching Assignments

The faculty member's statement could be written uniquely for this document, and/or could incorporate teaching-related sections from the promotion/tenure dossier candidate statement, and/or could be extracted from syllabi or other writings.

Extent of teaching would be a compilation of data from many sources. The teacher's agreed-upon course load would be described, together with information on typical teaching, advising and other teaching-related loads in the department. Students could provide data on extent of availability and extent of involvement. Colleagues could provide data on efforts beyond the minimal load.

Scholarly Activity

Examples of writings about education, information about the scholarly activities described, and student views on links between this scholarly activity and teaching could be assembled.

Contributions to Department and University Teaching

The faculty member should document the time and attention given to these teaching-related efforts. Colleague comments could supplement the teacher's information. Where students are directly involved (e.g. student groups) their views can provide an additional source of evidence.

Formal Instruction

The faculty member assembles most of the data on instructional planning; colleagues may also provide critical commentary. Student views on the teacher's preparation and planning may also be included here. The teacher's self assessment of instructional skill should be provided. For instructional delivery, student views are central. The teacher should solicit systematic, anonymous evaluations from students in each class each semester. In addition, retrospective evaluation by graduates and other mechanisms for documenting student experience are suggested. The reports of colleagues who observe the teacher's classes or who teach affiliated classes can also be included.

Individual Student Contact

Evaluations by and about students should be a central focus of the data assembled for this category. The teacher lists the pertinent advising/mentoring/research data and could solicit systematic and objective student evaluations of this teaching. Colleagues and administrators (who for example might be involved in the research or advising) can also provide evidence. Employers or others might provide information on the outcomes of this teaching.

Report of the Committee on Teaching Evaluation

ATTACHMENT B:
Evaluation of Faculty Teaching

Directions to Evaluators:

For each category, note the factors that should be taken into consideration and the documentation that should be available to support your evaluation. In each section, the evidence to be considered would include not only information provided by the faculty member but also data from students, colleagues, and administrators to supplement the faculty member's compiled evidence.

The statement on Educational Philosophy and Teaching Assignments, which is not formally rated, should be reviewed as a frame of reference for judging the qualities below.

For each category below, assign a rating using this scale:

4 = outstanding
3 = excellent
2 = satisfactory
1 = unsatisfactory

Scholarly Activity in Support of Teaching

Participation in professional development efforts focusing on improving specialty knowledge and teaching skill; seeking/receiving funding for teaching improvement; publication of writings about education; production of educational materials such as texts or software.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, or explain this rating:

Contributions to Departmental and University Teaching

Participation in departmental, college, or university curricular development; service on departmental, college or university committees on teaching matters; participation in meetings and colloquia related to teaching and furtherance of student education; guest lectures and substitute teaching for colleagues; contributions to long-range department and university teaching mission.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, or explain this rating:

Instructional Preparation and Planning

Energy and thought committed by the teacher to planning and preparation, appropriateness and currency of course content, texts, and activities as reflected in syllabi; appropriateness and fairness of evaluation procedures; use of innovative, varied and/or updated teaching methods and materials (where applicable); adherence to established policies for classroom activities and examinations.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, explain this rating:

Instructional Delivery

Student evaluations of formal instruction, peer visits and evaluations of instruction; clear connection between course content and instructional delivery system used; exams congruent with course intention, content, and assignments; use of aids, handouts, etc to facilitate learning; regular and punctual class attendance.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, explain this rating:

Individual Interaction with Students

Data from students and faculty activity reports on guidance of student research and professional development; contributions to student success, availability for course-related and individual student conferences, student evaluation of individual teaching contacts.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, explain this rating:

Overall Evaluation of Teaching

Documented activities and other evidence not included above may contribute to the overall evaluation. Evaluators should comment below on how the categories above and additional information (such as teaching awards, role in inspiring students, meeting or surpassing goals for teaching excellence) have been taken into account in the overall rating.

Rating: ____. Comments to define, support, explain this rating: